

In the Specification:

Please amend paragraph 0020 beginning on page 8 as follows:

[0020] Then according to the present invention, instead of a thick capping layer (greater than 300Å) as was used in the prior art, a thin (less than 300Å) stop layer 32 is deposited as an etch stop or diffusion stop, as illustrated in Figure 2B. Preferably, stop layer 32 is deposited to a thickness of about 100Å. The stop layers may be organic or inorganic and suitable materials for use as stop layer 32 may be metal or non-metal and include silicon, nitrogen, carbon, oxygen and/or hydrogen containing materials such as SiC, SiCN, SiCO, SiN, SiO, SiOCH and other carbon-like materials. Further, as will be appreciated by those skilled in the art, the thin stop layer 32 may be multilayered and deposited in more than one step, and the various multilayers may be of different suitable materials. Figure 2g illustrates that the stop layer 32 includes a sub-layer 32<sub>1</sub> and a sub-layer 32<sub>2</sub>, although the stop layer 32 may include more than two layers.

Suitable methods for depositing a single or multi thin layer of selected suitable materials include a PVD (Plasma Vapor Deposition) process, a CVD (Chemical Vapor Deposition) process, and ALD (Atomic Layer Deposition) process and an Ion Beam Deposition process. Further, the thin layer is preferably deposited at a temperature of between about 200° C and 500° C.